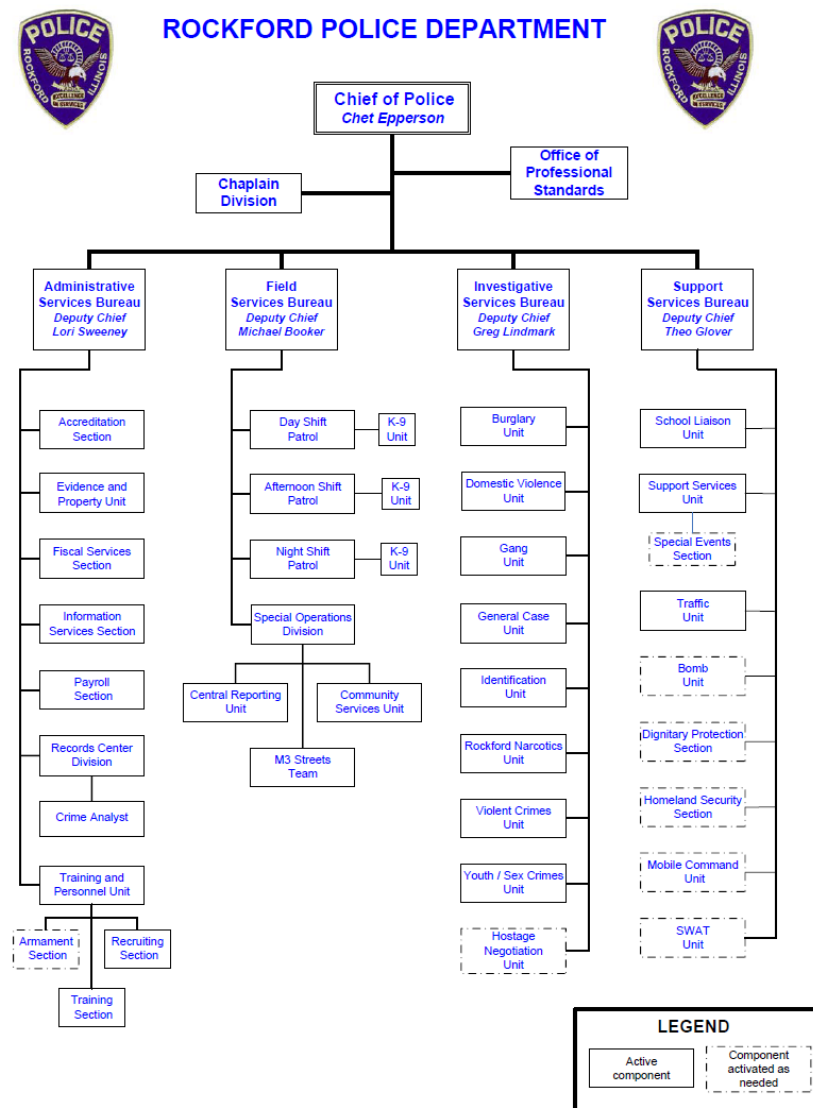


# Neighborhood-Based Policing in Rockford, Illinois



This document is the second in a series of reports that examine police service delivery in Rockford, Illinois. In this report we look at how the department can more effectively provide uniformed field services through the implementation of police area commands. In this approach, the department transfers most of its resources to area command center. Moreover, the commanders of these areas have the authority and responsibility to allocate resources. In the third report we will examine the department's operations support units, and describe how they will fit into the decentralized organization.

The Rockford Police Department has begun the process of re-shaping the organization to be more efficient and effective. It has adopted a sophisticated approach to policing that includes utilizing crime control strategies that evidence has shown to be effective in reducing crime. The department has emphasized to need to collaborate with citizens in crime control efforts, and they have shifted to an emphasis on "hot spots"; those places in the community that generate the greatest number of calls for service. These strategies have received widespread community support, and are showing significant promise.



Our examination of the RPD organizational structure suggests some opportunities for modification. These changes, we believe, will significantly enhance the department's developmental efforts. There are two aspects of the RPD organization that are problematic. First, the organization is too compartmentalized and is structured around vertical channels. In other words, there are a relatively large number of bureaus (four), and accountability tends to travel vertically up and down the bureau chain of command, rather than across bureaus.

The second concern with the organization is that it is highly centralized and oriented temporally. That is, the department's activities emanate largely from headquarters and service delivery is organized around patrol shifts rather than around areas of the community.

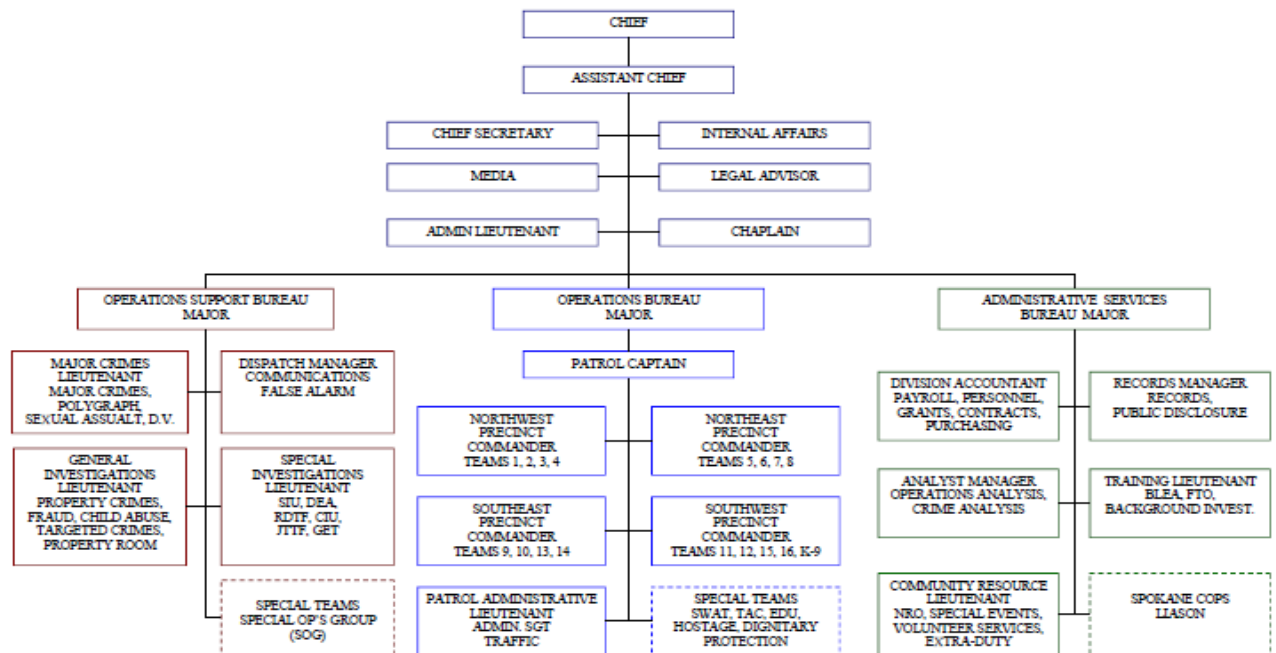
It is important to emphasize that there is no one ideal organizational structure. The principal factor that one must examine in evaluating an organizational structure is the extent to which the structure supports the delivery of police services. That is, it is important that the organizational structure supports, and not hinder the implementation of the strategic vision of the department. In order to better understand the relationship between structure and policy implementation we examine three police organizations similar to RPD:

- Spokane, Washington
- Madison, Wisconsin
- Lowell, Massachusetts

The following table describes the attributes of these communities and their police departments.<sup>1</sup>

	<b>Population</b>	<b>% Minority</b>	<b>Square Miles</b>	<b>Median Household Income</b>	<b>Sworn Officers</b>
Rockford	139,173	48%	56	37,667	306
Spokane	192,777	15%	58	32,273	300
Madison	218,432	29%	68	41,941	438
Lowell	104,351	45%	14	39,192	250

<sup>1</sup> Community demographics are derived from US Census 2005 American Community Survey.



## SPOKANE POLICE DEPARTMENT 2009

1-29-09

The Spokane Police Department is our first case study. The department maintains centralized investigations and administrative activities. The majority of uniformed officers are assigned to precincts. Starting in 2008, the Spokane Police Department began its implementation of a Neighborhood Policing Plan. In a series of several phases, the north/south patrol response format was separated into four precincts, each composed of two districts.

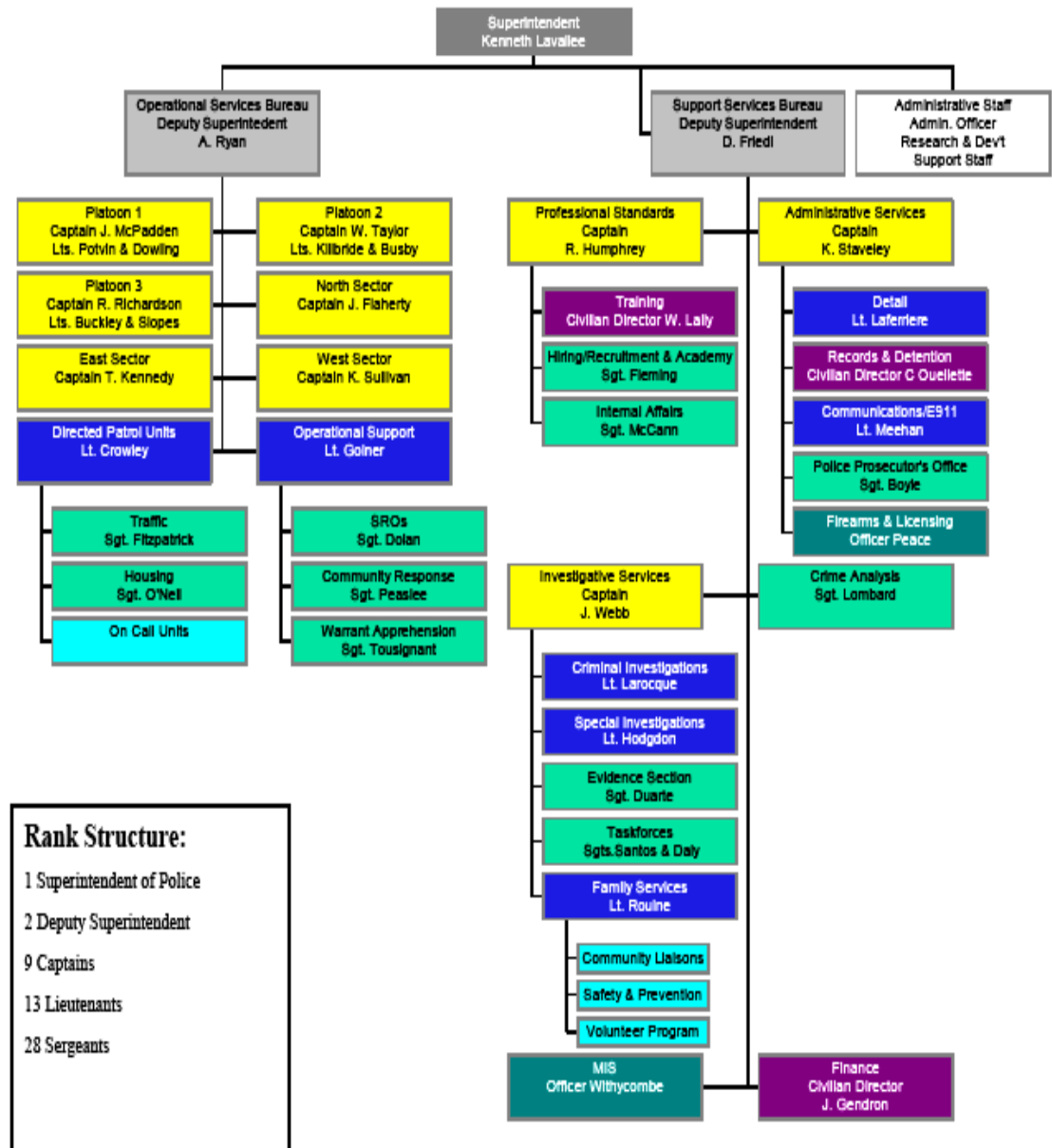
Partnering with local Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Shops, patrol officers are permanently assigned to these smaller geographical areas, creating the opportunity to build lasting partnerships with community members. Each district will have at least one Neighborhood Resource Officer (NRO) assigned, and each precinct will have one crime analyst specifically examining crime trends for that precinct.

This new deployment creates 16 patrol teams working 11 hour days. The teams will have opposite days off, with 8 patrol teams on duty each day. Shifts were designed to ensure that more patrol officers would be available during peak call times to respond to citizen calls.

The next organizational chart is that of the Madison, Wisconsin Police Department (438 sworn officers). This department has extended the idea of decentralization even further. Once again, we observe that the department has two bureaus (operations and support). Within the operations bureau there are four district commands. Each district is lead by a captain, and each district commander is assigned both police officers and detectives. This approach decentralizes most criminal investigation to area commands. The traffic division, however, remains centralized under the support bureau command.



Another good example for decentralized police operations is the Lowell Massachusetts Police Department (250 sworn officers). In recent years the Lowell Police Department (LPD) has undertaken the task of strategic planning as an ongoing process. The steps have included staff input from all ranks and positions with the assistance of organizational consultants. With the overall departmental plan in mind, staff of each division creates a strategic plan that will help to guide them in attaining individual and agency-wide goals. Department-wide goals have been established since 1994, and since then, all but the construction of a new police station have been realized.



Through the strategic planning processes, as well as with input from the people who live and work in the city of Lowell, it appeared that residents could be best served and crime most affected with the presence of a consistent officer in neighborhoods. This method of

assignment also seemed to make the most sense for supervision and accountability of all levels of officers.

In conversations with residents, as well as with officers, there was frustration experienced by all regarding the ability of officers to investigate neighborhood property crimes and crimes of disorder. It was determined that officers who have ownership in an area, and who have knowledge of and a relationship with the residents could best police the city. Supervisors and detectives are also assigned to a geographic area. Through this assignment method it is hoped that residents will become more readily acquainted with their area officers and will receive a continuum of police services from a team of officers known to them.

Geographic assignment, the final phase of reorganization of the LPD, began in January 1999. The feedback from personnel and residents has been positive. Neighbors report that officers are more visible, on foot and on bicycles in their neighborhoods. Officers have demonstrated teamwork and greater initiative in the areas in which they are regularly assigned. Supervisory personnel have now found managerial responsibilities that include opportunities to regularly work within an area, with the same officers daily, further instilling the concept of shared responsibility and teamwork.

Lowell has been divided into three sectors, each commanded by a Captain. This captain has overall responsibility for the administration of police services, personnel, neighborhood problems and concerns in an area.

- In each sector are Lieutenants, Sergeants, Patrol Officers and Detectives who work daily to provide comprehensive police services.
- The Sector Captains coordinate their priorities and the provision of services through the shifts through the Shift Coordinator.
- The Detective Divisions – Criminal Investigations and Special Investigations – are available as support and experts for the Sector Personnel.

### **Decentralizing the Rockford Police Department**

There are a number of reasons to believe that the city of Rockford would benefit from decentralizing its police department. First, this approach shifts the focus of police activities from time (shift) to place. This is consistent with community and neighborhood based strategies. Second, decentralization will allow for accountability at the community level. That is, a neighborhood based approach to staffing will permit commanders to more effectively allocate resources; they will not be constrained by artificial organizational barriers. Third, evidence suggests that police officers perform better when their efforts are community focused. The officers in decentralized departments can more readily learn about the community, and they can get to know the citizens they serve. Finally, providing neighborhood-based services are more customer-focused, and will be particularly more accessible than the current public safety building.



Based on our analysis we are proposing that the Rockford Police Department be organized around three areas. These areas are described as follows:

### **Area 1**

District 1 includes everything west of the river. The rough boundaries are Elmwood to the north, Springfield to the west, and US Hwy 20 to the south. There are sections of the city outside that boundary, including the area surrounding Meridian between Kilburn and Auburn, just as there are some sections within those boundaries that are not within the city limits.

### **Area 2**

District 2 is bordered on the west by the river and to the north by Loves Park. The eastern boundary of District 2 is N 2nd Street until you cross south of Spring Creek. At that point, the boundary is Parkview. Moving south, the boundary is Parkview until you cross Rural, where the boundary is Welty. South of State St, the boundary is Rockford Ave/20th Street all the way to the southern city limits. The southern boundary of District 2 is roughly Blackhawk Rd on the east side of 11th Street and Baxter Rd on the west side of 11th Street.

### **Area 3**

The western border of District 3 is the same as the eastern border of District 2 (N 2nd Street –Parkview – Welty – Rockford – 20th Street). Forest Hills Rd is the northwest boundary between Riverside Blvd and Spring Creek Rd. The northern boundary is Riverside Blvd. The eastern boundary is roughly I-90 north of State Street, though the area between Rote and State on the east side of I-90 is included in the Rockford city limits. South of State, the eastern boundary of the district moves west incrementally from Bell School north of Mill, to Perryville north of Harrison, and Mulford north of US Hwy 20. The southern boundary is Blackhawk Rd.

The following table illustrates comparative data for the new configuration.

	<b>Area One</b>	<b>Area Two</b>	<b>Area Three</b>
Population	52,826	34,215	63,074
Percentage Minority	55%	31%	17%
Households	19,455	14,171	25,532
Group A Crime Rate (2008)	207.81	249.54	109.13
Dispatches <sup>2</sup>	42,919 (41%)	35,090 (34%)	25,545 (25%)
Square Miles	16.74	18.37	20.98

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<sup>2</sup> July 2007 – June 2008



These proposed districts provide an alternative model for the delivery of police services in Rockford. The fully decentralized area command model will have significant impact on department organization and facilities.

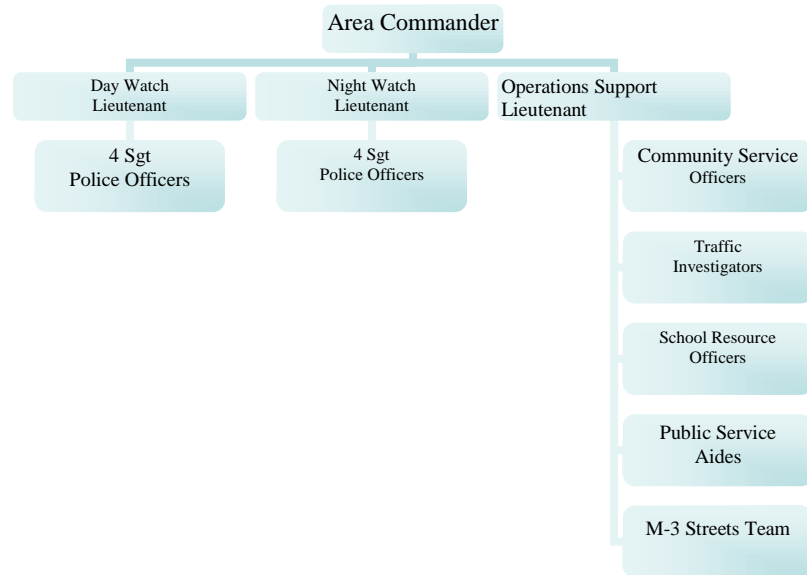
The following figure illustrates a proposed organizational structure for an RPD Area Command. There are several key elements to this design:

- The area is under the direction of a commander level position, which will have authority over all personnel assigned to the command.
- There will be a watch commanders assigned to each shift in each area. This will significantly increase the presence of senior staff on a 24/7 basis.
- All operations support personnel (M-3, Community Service Officers, School Resource Officers, and Traffic Officers) will be assigned to the area commands.
- Although operations support personnel are formally assigned to the operations support lieutenant, they will be under the direction of the shift lieutenants and sergeants.
- The patrol component will be staffed by 120 police officers, allocated proportionately to the areas based on calls for service.
- Patrol Officers will be assigned to 12 hour shifts. Thus, each shift will have two platoons (with alternate day off patterns) and each platoon will have two sergeants.
- The plan calls for the use of police service aides (PSA). These members are non-sworn personnel that can perform duties to support area operations. Consider the community service officers in Fremont California. Each of these aides performs the following tasks<sup>3</sup>:
  - Enforces traffic and parking ordinances.
  - Writes parking tickets.
  - Orders vehicle seizures.
  - Investigates non-injury and minor injury traffic accidents.
  - Interviews witnesses and takes statements.
  - Ascertains accident sequence.
  - Prepares accident diagrams.
  - Performs traffic control.
  - Responds to and investigates traffic complaints.
  - Receives reports of commercial, residential and automobile burglaries, petty theft, found property, abandoned bicycles, missing persons, auto theft, and other crimes with no known suspects.
  - Conducts initial investigations and prepares reports of findings.
  - Ascertains value of stolen vehicles and other lost/stolen items.
  - Investigates vandalism.
  - Responds to animal control emergencies.
  - Assists in crime scene investigations.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.ci.fremont.ca.us/Employment/JobDescriptions/job3745.htm>

## RPD Area Command Organizational Structure



Based on this area command structure we can develop a staffing plan for field operations. It is pictured below.

Position	Area 1	Area 2	Area 3	Total
Commander	1	1	1	3
Lt.	3	3	3	9
Sergeant	8	8	8	24
Patrol	50	40	30	120
Comm. Service	2	2	2	6
SRO	3	3	3	9
Traffic	5	5	5	15
M-3	8	6	6	20
PSA	4	4	4	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>218</b>

An important aspect of this analysis is the effect of decentralization on field operations service delivery. In the first table we illustrate the number of patrol officers assigned to work each shift in each area. This is based on the proportional allocation of 120 personnel. In Area One, for example, 50 officers would be assigned to patrol, and 25 to each 12 hour shift. As a result, on every day either 12 or 13 officers would be assigned to work to cover 4 beats. As you can see, on a city-wide basis 30 officers are assigned to work during each shift. This is considerably higher than the current staffing level of 18 during non-overlap hours.

	Area 1 (50)	Area 2 (40)	Area 3(30)	Total
Assigned to shift	25	20	15	<b>60</b>
Scheduled <sup>4</sup>	13/12	10	8/7	<b>30</b>

If we include the Operations Support Personnel in the pool patrol staffing increases to 170 officers.<sup>5</sup> The following table shows staffing levels if these personnel were assigned to the same 12 hour schedule. We observe that there is a minimum of 42 personnel assigned around the clock.

u	Area 1 (68)	Area 2 (56)	Area 3 (46)	Total
Assigned to shift	34	28	23	<b>85</b>
Scheduled	17	14	12/11	<b>43/42</b>

## Facilities

In addition to staffing by geography, the Rockford Police Department should consider opening police facilities to accommodate this new organizational configuration. While the prospect of adding implies a burden in terms of cost, it also poses the opportunity to plan, design and locate new facilities in a manner responsive to community needs and desires. The new area command stations should be consistent with several assumptions: <sup>6</sup>

- 1. The effectiveness of police service is enhanced when provided on a neighborhood level.**

Recent advances in communication and the common use of cars has had a significant impact on police operations and community perceptions of police effectiveness. The patrol car in many instances has replaced the beat officer; and,

<sup>4</sup> The actual number of officers on duty will be lower due to sick leave, vacation, etc.

<sup>5</sup> Fifteen traffic officers are investigators

<sup>6</sup> Much of this discussion is based on facilities planning conducted by the San Francisco Police Department.

as a result, a certain detachment has developed between the police and community. In an effort to strengthen rapport and cooperation between the police and community, citizens and officers alike have sought means for reestablishing police/community relations. The decentralization of police services through district stations is viewed as an effective means for developing and maintaining police community ties. Both police professionals and the public are generally of the view that stationing police personnel within a neighborhood and providing a broader range of services at the neighborhood or district level foster a greater sense of mutual commitment, concern and understanding.

**2. Technological and social changes require adaptability and flexibility of police facilities.**

Technological and social changes have a continuing impact on police operations. Technological applications have greatly increased the effectiveness of police service and will probably continue to do so. Future effectiveness of police facilities will depend on their adaptability to new technology. New and renovated police facilities must have the inherent capacity and flexibility to adapt to technological and operational changes within a changing society.

**3. While facilities contribute to effective police operations, the prime responsibility for public safety rests with both police personnel and the community.**

Police personnel, the programs, training, and policies that guide their actions and the nature of community support are the key elements in effective crime prevention and public safety. Facilities are important only to the extent they contribute to efficient operations and provide the setting for constructive police neighborhood interaction.

In order to provide responsive police service, the organization of police operations should meet two basic concerns: police service on a neighborhood level, and overall citywide coordination of police activities. Responsiveness to neighborhoods calls for close community integration of services such as patrols, community relations, and public information. Overall departmental coordination requires the centralization of administration, communications staff services, records, and investigations in order to provide a citywide overview.

Those police services which relate on a neighborhood level, or which need not be carried out centrally, should be assigned to district stations. Activities which relate to the city as a whole should be centralized. The expansion of the number of free standing facilities housing specialized functions should be discouraged since facilities in themselves require

manpower for security and administrative staffing. As a general rule, expansion of police services should be accommodated either at district stations or at police headquarters.

### **Goals in designing police facilities**

#### ***Locate police functions that are best conducted on a centralized basis in a police headquarters building.***

Effective police service and management require the overall coordination of departmental activities and programs so that all citizens are assured of an equitable level of police service. Such coordination can best be achieved through the centralization of certain key activities. Such as administration, departmental policy formulation, program planning, manpower and resource allocation, information management, citywide operations and communications control and dispatch, and centralization of police records. Centralization of these functions minimizes administrative activities at the district station level, while maximizing effectiveness by freeing police officers for patrol work and by supporting them with a comprehensive communications and information network.

#### ***Enhance closer police/community interaction through the decentralization of police services that need not be centralized.***

Expressed community desires for maintaining a district station concept stems from the feeling that stationing police officers within a neighborhood fosters a greater sense of commitment, concern, and understanding, resulting in better police service and expanded community participation and cooperation in public safety efforts. This feeling is shared by police officers and suggests a greater decentralization of police personnel, operations, and services.

To the extent possible, the broad range of police services that do not require centralization for effective performance, should be decentralized with service responsibility assigned on a neighborhood or a district station level. Decentralization of services should be based on a comprehensive review of current police operations, long-range programs for future services, and community input.

#### ***Design facilities to allow for flexibility, future expansion, and security and safety for personnel, while still maintaining an inviting appearance that is in scale with neighborhood development.***

The long-term service life of police facilities requires flexibility in their design so that changing methods for providing police services can be accommodated. Technological, social and attitudinal changes affect police operations, requiring facility modifications to accommodate changing personnel, equipment, and work patterns. Police facilities should be easily adaptable to new special configurations and have sufficient capacity to meet future service requirements.

#### ***Combine police facilities with other public uses whenever multi-use facilities support planning goals, fulfill neighborhood needs, and meet police service needs.***

Multiple use of police, fire, public health and other services or land uses should be encouraged whenever combined use is mutually reinforcing. In general, similar criteria govern the location of police, fire and emergency public health facilities and sufficient linkages exist between these services to warrant the consideration of combining these activities within one facility.

***Locate and design facilities in a manner that encourages constructive police neighborhood interaction.***

The nature of police work entails numerous daily contacts with citizens, often during trying situations wherein the police are called upon to resolve conflicts or maintain law and order. Continuous communication, interaction and cooperation between the police and community on an informal basis foster understanding and develop ties which strengthen the community and aid the police in their peace-keeping responsibilities.

Neighborhoods want to relate to police personnel on an individual basis, as partners working together to improve the quality of community life. That process is aided by deploying police personnel on a district station basis. However, district station buildings in themselves do not generate community ties. Police personnel should continue their efforts to establish, maintain and expand those ties which reinforce police/community relations. The location, distribution, design and operation of police facilities can be a catalyst for promoting closer police, community understanding and more responsive and effective police service.

***Provide expanded police/community relations and police services through outreach programs, primarily utilizing existing facilities.***

Convenient community access to both police services and personnel promotes better public use of police services and develops closer police/community ties. District stations, conveniently located to neighborhood shopping areas, provide the opportunity for filing crime and accident reports, paying traffic warrants, receiving crime prevention information, discussing problems with community relations officers, and meeting neighborhood patrol personnel. Police officers in turn get to know the people they serve, including their concerns and expectations relating to police services.

**Criteria for Police Facilities**

The task of designing police facilities is both complex and labor intensive. Below are some ideas to help guide the process

**AREA STATIONS**

- **Functional Criteria:**
  - Outlet for neighborhood-related police services and other operations that need not be centralized.
  - Command responsibility for district police activities.
  - Administrative and support communications center for district patrol activities.
  - Service and information for "walk-in" requests.
  - Storage for police vehicles and equipment.

- Briefing, locker, and deployment center for patrol personnel.
- Interview rooms.
- Center for police/neighborhood interaction.
- **Distribution Criteria:**
  - Stations should serve recognized and geographically defined areas of the city, and should encompass entire neighborhoods to the extent possible.
  - There should be no major physical barriers within a district service area which may impede access by police.
  - The number of stations should minimize patrol force travel time to and from the areas served.
  - The number of stations should reflect community desires for these facilities, consistent with community willingness to pay for their construction, maintenance and staffing.
  - Stations should service equitable workloads and provide a uniform level of service to all citizens.
- **Location Criteria:**
  - Stations should be located so as to minimize access time to all points within the district served.
  - Stations should be accessible to the public, particularly by public transit.
  - Stations should be located so as not to constitute a nuisance or hazard to surrounding land uses.
  - Whenever possible, stations should be combined with other public facilities so as to maximize community awareness and impact of public services.
- **Neighborhood Relations:**
  - Ready public access to police services district personnel should be assured.
  - Community use of facilities such as meeting rooms should be provided on a supervised basis.
- **Design Criteria:**
  - Stations should be open, unimposing and in scale with surrounding development.
  - Controlled access and security for police personnel and public.
  - Community meeting rooms should be included if these facilities are not readily available.
  - Sufficient capacity and special flexibility to accommodate increase in patrol force assignments of both male and female officers, and expansion of police services.
  - Good vehicular access and dispatch flexibility should be available.
  - Sufficient secure parking for police and personnel vehicles.



## Conclusion

In this report we have looked at the decentralization of field services in Rockford. In our opinion, we think that this approach makes good sense for the RPD for several reasons:

- Rockford is large enough, and its neighborhoods diverse enough, to suggest that “a one size fits all” approach will not work as well as an approach that is more focused on place.
- Decentralization of the police department will coincide nicely with similar efforts in other city units.
- Shifting resources to area commands will afford managers more flexibility in crafting and implementing community based crime control strategies.
- Police officers will be better able to focus on area based problems and craft solutions that are aligned with community expectations.
- Decentralization will provide a more appropriate basis for accountability, particularly as it applies to ROCKSTAT.

We believe the department should move forward towards decentralization. There are a number of implementation issues.

*Staffing.* The following table illustrates current **RPD sworn staffing**.

	<u>Patrol</u>	<u>Support</u>	<u>Detectives</u>	<u>Admin</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Chief				1	<b><i>1</i></b>
Deputy Chief	1	1	1	1	<b><i>4</i></b>
Lieutenants	4	1	n/a	1	<b><i>6</i></b>
Sergeants	20	2	8	2	<b><i>32</i></b>
Investigators	n/a	16	61	4	<b><i>81</i></b>
Officers	<u>171</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>n/a</u>	<u>n/a</u>	<b><i>182</i></b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>9</b>	<b><i>306</i></b>

In the next table we illustrate the **proposed staffing for the area commands**. You can see that in order to accommodate decentralization additional resources will be required. In some cases these positions will be newly created. In other cases, these positions can be transferred from other units.

Position	Required for Area Commands	New or Transferred from Other Bureaus
Commander	3	<b>3</b>
Lt.	9	<b>5</b>
Sergeant	24	<b>4</b>
Patrol	120	<b>0</b>
Comm. Service	6	<b>0</b>
SRO	9	<b>0</b>
Traffic	15	<b>0</b>
M-3	20	<b>0</b>
PSA	12	<b>12</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>24</b>

Using current salary data we can estimate the potential cost of this re-organization.

There are several assumptions:

- Two of the four deputy chief positions will be eliminated and converted to area commanders.
- Two lieutenant positions (one from support and one from administration) will be reassigned to the area commands. Beyond these transfers, the department will need three additional lieutenants.
- Four sergeants will be reassigned from other bureaus to patrol. Thus, there is no need to increase the number of sergeants.
- The annual salary for a PSA will be \$25,000.

Based on these assumptions we can estimate the following impact:

Position	Annual Cost <sup>7</sup>	+/-	Cost
Deputy Chief	137,704	-2	<b>(275,408)</b>
Commander	131,162	+3	<b>393,485</b>
Lieutenants	124,927	+3	<b>374,782</b>
PSA	33,750	+12	<b>405,000</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>+16</b>	<b>897,859</b>

Of course, there are also potentially significant savings from this proposed plan. One of the biggest opportunities to reduce costs is through the reduction of overtime. At the present time the determination as to whether the department is at “minimum staffing”, is based on counting the numbers of officers that are on duty in the patrol

<sup>7</sup> Based on starting salary-includes 35% fringe benefit rate.

division. If, by contrast, the department were to include the on duty operations support officers in the determination of minimum staffing, it would potentially eliminate the requirement to hire officers back to fill vacant spots. In 2008 the patrol division hired back the equivalent of 1226 officer days (12260 hours). At the time and one half overtime rate of \$42.00 this is the equivalent of \$514,920.00. Much of this cost, we believe can be eliminated with no degradation of police service delivery.

*Facilities.* The design, procurement and implementation of three or four facilities will be a significant administrative and resource burden for the RPD. While decentralization would be enhanced by neighborhood based facilities, the department could begin the process of decentralization prior to the time that the facilities are occupied. The most critical task is shifting from a time based model to a place based model.

The cost of police facilities can vary significantly depending on the type of structure, building location, and local construction costs. One typically used approach is to estimate the size requirements based on the number of officers that will utilize the structure. In this approach, we would allocate 600 square feet for each officer. Moreover, in this region the cost of construction is around \$300.00 per square foot. Using this metric the area one station with 80 officers would require 48,000 square feet and cost \$14,400,000.

Of course, there are many ways to develop area command stations utilizing existing structures. The cost of this approach will vary significantly according to the existing structures, and costs of renovation.

We recommend that the department develop a task force to work on the development of the new facilities. A great tool for such an effort is the *IACP Police Facility Planning Guide*.